REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested. Claims 1-14 are pending. By the present amendment, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, and 9 are amended, and claims 13 and 14 are added. Claim 4 is amended to clarify the arrangement of the openings in order to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112.

Applicant appreciates the allowance of claims 3, 6, and 9 if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 3, 6, and 9 have been amended to include all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. Therefore, claims 3, 6, and 9 are allowable.

Claim 1 is amended to recite that the other of the openings of the outer housing of the gas generator is closed by a closure device. Neither Lohr, Okada, Thomas, nor any other prior art taken either alone or in combination discloses or suggests that the other of the openings of the outer housing of the gas generator is closed by a closure device.

By contrast, Lohr discloses that both of its outlets (56, 58) are opened to allow gas to flow therethrough. Okada also discloses that both of its openings (22) are opened to allow gas to flow therethrough.

Further, it would not modify either Lohr or Okada to provide the invention claimed in amended claim 1. To establish a claim of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the reference or to combine reference

teachings (MPEP §706.02(j)). Further, if the proposed combination "would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified, then the teachings of the references are not sufficient to render the claims prima facie obvious." (MPEP §2143.01).

There is no suggestion to modify either Lohr or Okada to close one of their openings. Also, to modify either the Lohr or Okada reference to close one of their openings would affect the principle operation of either reference. Lohr teaches a vortex generator 54 that separates a cold gaseous stream through its cold gas outlet 56 and a hot gaseous stream through its hot gas outlet 56. The cold gas outlet is in communication with the diffuser and the hot gas outlet 58 is in communication with an exhaust (See Column 6, lines 62-66). If either one of these outlets were closed the vortex generator could not operate to separate the gases, and also gas of the closed outlet could not get to its proper destination.

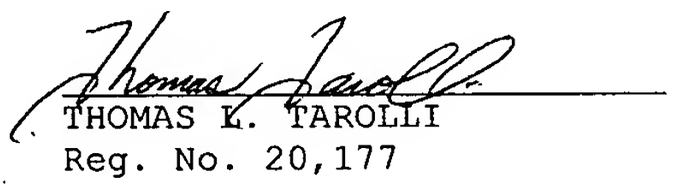
Okada discloses flaps 50 that are provided over the openings 20 in various positions to vary the flow rate out of the openings 20 and into the air bag 13. The various positions include a maximum open position, a minimum open position and an intermediate opening position as illustrated in Figs 14 to 16 (See Col. 8, lines 27-32). If either one of the openings is closed, the flaps 50 could not operate to vary the flow rate out of the openings 20. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10-14 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are therefore allowable as

depending from an allowable claim and for the specific features recited therein.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,



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